

Enhancing Students' Cultural Confidence in Junior High School English Teaching in the Context of Information Technology

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[**Abstract**] In response to the issues of limited traditional cultural content in English textbooks, monotonous teaching approaches, insufficient teacher awareness of cultural confidence cultivation, and a weakening of students' national cultural identity, this paper explores methods to enhance junior high school students' cultural confidence in English education under the influence of modern information technology. By integrating case studies, this study illustrates six specific approaches: creating online questionnaires to assess students' prior knowledge; leveraging digital resources to enrich cultural understanding; optimizing assignment design to support collaborative teacher-student evaluation; combining online and offline activities to promote cultural inheritance; fostering teachers' cultural awareness to enhance their instructional competence; and implementing assessment-driven teaching to cultivate cultural confidence. This paper takes Unit 2 of the ninth-grade English textbook from People's Education Press, "I think that mooncakes are delicious!", as an example to demonstrate practical applications. The unit, focusing on festivals, offers opportunities to explore both Chinese and Western cultural traditions, thereby enhancing students' ability to appreciate and express cultural values in English. Through diverse and multimodal learning strategies, students not only gain deeper insights into cultural connotations but also develop intercultural communicative competence and national pride. The findings suggest that effectively combining information technology with culturally responsive pedagogy can create an enriching environment for students to internalize and practice cultural confidence. Teachers are encouraged to act as cultural ambassadors, guiding students through the exploration and dissemination of Chinese culture. By incorporating formative and summative assessments, teachers can more accurately evaluate and support students' cultural growth. This integrated model provides a foundation for future educational innovation and reflects the broader goals of national curriculum reform. Ultimately, the fusion of information technology and cultural education in junior high school English instruction offers a promising pathway toward nurturing students with global perspectives and strong cultural roots.

[**Key words**] cultural confidence; information technology; English teaching

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1 Introduction

The *Compulsory Education English Curriculum Standards (2022 Edition)* clearly states the curriculum goal of "deepening the understanding and recognition of Chinese culture, establishing an international perspective, and strengthening cultural confidence", emphasizing its role in "cultivating patriotic feelings and firming cultural confidence". This highlights the significant meaning of enhancing students' cultural confidence in junior high school English teaching for cultivating talents with international vision and cross-cultural communication abilities in the new era. Against the backdrop of the rapid development of modern information technology, the *Curriculum Standards* proposes the educational concept of "promoting the deep integration of information technology and English teaching", encouraging teachers to rationally utilize information technology to promote the development of online-offline combined teaching models. This provides support for students' autonomous, cooperative, and

inquiry-based learning. By integrating information technology into junior high school English teaching, teachers not only expand the channels for students to learn and use English but also help students enrich cultural knowledge, improve cultural literacy, and practice cultural confidence through multimodal means, laying a solid foundation for the spread and development of excellent Chinese culture.

In the information age, the diverse forms of information dissemination, such as multimedia resources and online platforms, have brought new opportunities and challenges to cultural education. Students are exposed to a large amount of global cultural information, making it particularly important to guide them to establish a correct cultural identity. English teaching, as a bridge for cross-cultural communication, should not only focus on language skills but also shoulder the mission of cultural inheritance and confidence cultivation. The application of information technology, such as big data analysis, online learning platforms, and multimedia courseware, provides powerful technical support for achieving this goal, enabling more intuitive, interactive, and personalized cultural education in the classroom.

2 Current status of cultivating cultural confidence in junior high school English teaching

Junior high school students are in a critical period for the formation of the outlook on world, life and value. In junior high school English teaching, teachers should guide students to actively understand Chinese and Western cultures, inherit and carry forward excellent Chinese traditional culture, and serve as inheritors and spokespersons of Chinese culture. However, the current junior high school English teaching still faces the following challenges in cultural confidence cultivation.

2.1 Limited traditional cultural content in textbooks and lack of integration of extra-curricular resources

Textbooks serve as important carriers for students to increase knowledge, broaden horizons, and enrich emotions, as well as crucial approaches for cultivating students' cultural confidence. In junior high school English textbooks, the proportion of content related to Chinese culture is relatively low, which affects the formation of students' national cultural identity and is not conducive to the inheritance and development of excellent traditional culture. Moreover, some teachers rely solely on textbook content and ignore the integration of extra-curricular resources, resulting in students' lack of relevant cultural background knowledge and inability to deeply understand the cultural connotations of the knowledge in textbooks.

For example, in some mainstream junior high school English textbooks, the topics involving Chinese culture are mainly limited to festivals and simple daily customs, while the in-depth interpretation of cultural spirits such as traditional philosophy, art, and ethics is insufficient. This makes it difficult for students to form a comprehensive understanding of the depth and breadth of Chinese culture, and they may even develop the misconception that English learning is only related to Western culture. The lack of integration of extra-curricular resources, such as classic literary works, historical documentaries, and folk culture materials, further narrows students' cultural vision, making it hard to establish a strong cultural identity.

2.2 Monotonous teaching methods and lack of effective interaction

In junior high school English teaching, some teachers overly focus on students' mastery of language knowledge and the development of language skills, adopting single teaching methods that fail to effectively expand students' channels for learning and using the language. The lack of communication and interaction between teachers and students and among students in classroom teaching is not conducive to students' learning of cultural knowledge and exploration of cultural connotations. In addition, the insufficient application of modern information technology has also contributed to this problem. Many teachers have not fully utilized information technology to enhance classroom interaction, thus it is difficult to stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm in learning cultural knowledge.

Traditional teaching methods, such as teacher-centered lectures and rote memorization, make the classroom

atmosphere dull, and students are in a passive learning state. When encountering cultural content, students can only passively accept the teacher's explanation instead of actively participating in cultural exploration and discussion. The absence of information technology means that teachers cannot use vivid video materials, interactive online quizzes, or virtual cultural experience activities to create an immersive learning environment, resulting in students' low engagement in cultural learning and weak ability to perceive cultural details.

2.3 Insufficient awareness among teachers to foster cultural confidence

Teachers play a leading role in teaching activities, and their level of cultural literacy plays an important role in cultivating students' cultural confidence. However, some teachers in English teaching only focus on the explanation of language knowledge and the teaching of language skills, ignoring the cultivation of students' comprehensive qualities and the awareness of cultivating students' cultural confidence. This phenomenon makes students have a weak sense of identity with Chinese culture in the learning process, and the formation of cultural confidence is affected.

A survey shows that a considerable number of junior high school English teachers lack systematic training in Chinese culture, and their own cultural knowledge system is not perfect. When teaching cultural content, they often stay on the surface, unable to deeply interpret the cultural values and spiritual connotations behind the language. For example, when teaching the topic of Chinese festivals, teachers may only introduce festival customs but fail to explain the cultural concepts of "harmony" and "family reunion" contained in them, resulting in students' superficial understanding of cultural knowledge and difficult formation of emotional identification.

2.4 Weakening of students' national cultural identity

With the development of modern network technology and the widespread dissemination of information, students are exposed to a large amount of foreign culture in their daily lives, but they learn relatively little about Chinese culture, leading to the weakening of national cultural identity. Especially in the context of the vigorous development of network technology, students are easily attracted by foreign culture and ignore the value of local culture. Some teachers have not effectively guided students to use the network and information technology to deeply understand and learn Chinese culture in the teaching process, so that information technology has not played its due role in cultural education.

The popularity of international social media platforms and foreign cultural products has made students more exposed to Western lifestyles and values, and some of them even form the idea that "foreign things are better". At the same time, the lack of positive guidance from teachers makes students unable to correctly distinguish the essence and dross of culture, and cannot establish a rational cultural comparison perspective. The Internet, as a double-edged sword, can provide rich Chinese cultural resources, but if not guided properly, students will miss the opportunity to deeply understand traditional culture, resulting in the gradual weakening of cultural identity.

3 The practice of enhancing students' cultural confidence in junior high school English teaching under the background of information technology

Taking Unit 2 "I think that mooncakes are delicious!" of the People's Education Edition junior high school English textbook as an example, this paper discusses the approaches to enhancing students' cultural confidence in junior high school English teaching under the background of information technology. The topic of this unit is "festivals", which mainly introduces traditional festivals in China and the West, including festival cultures and customs. The Chinese traditional festivals involved in this unit are important carriers for inheriting and carrying forward excellent Chinese culture and cultivating national cultural identity. Teachers integrate information technology into English classroom teaching, which effectively enhances students' cultural confidence.

3.1 Creating online questionnaires to understand students' prior knowledge

Understanding students' existing background knowledge is a necessary part of teachers' teaching work, laying

a foundation for students' cultural knowledge learning and English communication ability improvement. Teachers use Wenjuanxing to make questionnaires before class in combination with the theme content of this unit, and diagnose students' existing relevant knowledge. Based on the data collected from the questionnaire survey, the key and difficult teaching points of the unit are connected, thus laying a foundation for classroom teaching.

Sample questions include:

- (1) Please introduce your favorite festival.
- (2) Do you know the origins and customs of some traditional Chinese festivals?
- (3) Have you ever tried explaining a Chinese festival to a foreign friend? If yes, what difficulties did you encounter?

Analysis of student responses can reveal several trends:

(1) Most students can mention some common festivals, such as the Spring Festival, the Mid-Autumn Festival, and the Dragon Boat Festival, and briefly describe the basic characteristics and related activities of these festivals;

(2) Many students have insufficient understanding of the historical origins and deep cultural connotations of these festivals. For example, although students know that eating dumplings and setting off firecrackers are the customs during the Spring Festival, few people know the stories and meanings behind these customs;

(3) Students have weak ability to describe festival culture in English, and often can only use simple vocabulary and sentence patterns to describe, unable to vividly and accurately convey the unique charm of festival culture.

Further analysis shows that students' understanding of festival culture is mostly derived from daily life experience, but lacks systematic and in-depth cognitive construction. For example, when explaining the Mid-Autumn Festival, most students can mention mooncakes and family reunion, but few can relate the festival to traditional Chinese poetry, the legend of Chang'e, or the cultural meaning of "reunion". In terms of English expression, students often have difficulties in accurately using cultural-specific terms, such as "mooncake", "lantern festival", and "dragon boat race", and their sentence structures are single, lacking the ability to express cultural details in a hierarchical manner.

3.2 Integrating online resources to enrich cultural knowledge

Understanding Chinese and Western cultural knowledge is the premise and foundation for cultivating students' cultural literacy, inheriting and carrying forward excellent traditional culture, and enhancing cultural confidence, providing necessary guarantee for the formation of students' good moral character and the development of comprehensive quality.

In the introduction phase, teachers integrate network resources and use videos to show the festival cultures and customs of different countries. After watching the video, students discuss which festivals and traditional customs are shown in the video to stimulate students' interest in learning the theme content of the unit, enrich the cultural knowledge related to Chinese and Western festivals, and lay a foundation for follow-up learning. The selected videos not only include classic documentaries such as "The Story of Chinese Festivals" but also short videos of foreign students experiencing Chinese festivals, which can help students understand cultural differences from a multi-angle perspective.

During the classroom instruction phase, students carry out group discussions and information integration combined with existing knowledge and collected materials and use mind maps to sort out the knowledge related to traditional festivals and discuss the differences between Chinese and Western festivals. Through these activities, students can more systematically master the connotation of festival culture and improve their language expression ability. In the group discussion, teachers guide students to use online dictionaries and cultural databases to verify

the accuracy of the information, such as querying the historical origin of the Dragon Boat Festival in the Chinese Cultural Network and comparing the different expressions of festival food in English and Chinese.

In the practical activity phase, teachers make full use of online learning platforms to organize students to carry out cultural exchanges with students in other countries and spread excellent Chinese traditional culture to understand the differences and commonalities of festival cultures between China and the West. Students can share their own festival customs and cultural stories with foreign students through video conferences, e-mails, and social media to enhance cross-cultural communication skills. Specifically, the teacher can establish a partner relationship with a junior high school in an English-speaking country, carry out a "Festival Culture Exchange" project, and let students introduce the Spring Festival in China and Christmas in the West in the form of video blogs.

In the summary and reflection phase, students share their learning achievements and feelings, and teachers guide students to reflect on how to practice cultural confidence in daily life, further consolidating and deepening the understanding of Chinese and Western cultures. Teachers can use online collaborative platforms such as Padlet to create a reflection wall, where students post their insights and discuss with each other, forming a multi-dimensional cultural cognition.

Through diversified teaching activities, teachers help students understand the festival cultures of China and the West, enhance cultural confidence, and improve cross-cultural communication skills, providing strong support for the development of students' comprehensive quality. The integration of network resources not only breaks the limitation of classroom space but also enables students to access authoritative cultural information, such as the digital library of the Palace Museum and the online exhibition of the National Museum, so that they can deeply understand the historical context behind cultural phenomena.

3.3 Optimizing assignment design for collaborative evaluation

Homework is an important link in the teaching process and an important bridge connecting teachers' teaching and students' learning, which can scientifically and effectively test students' learning achievements. Teachers can use multimedia technology to establish students' electronic files, collect students' works, videos, etc. in the learning process, and comprehensively understand students' progress and shortcomings. The electronic files record students' growth trajectory in cultural learning, such as the comparison between the first video introducing festivals and the later works, which can intuitively show the improvement of students' cultural expression ability.

Combined with the unit theme content and teaching tasks, the teacher assigned the following homework: students record videos to introduce their favorite traditional festivals and introduce the historical origins and traditional customs of the festivals. After recording, students post the videos on the class network platform for peer evaluation, and then the teacher records audio or video to give timely feedback on the students' works. The video homework requires students to not only present cultural facts but also express their personal understanding of cultural connotations, such as explaining why they think the Lantern Festival represents the inheritance of Chinese folk culture.

In the peer evaluation process, students evaluate their classmates' works based on language expression ability and cultural awareness. Through mutual learning and evaluation, students can learn from each other's strengths and overcome their own weaknesses. With the help of the network platform, teachers can timely feedback on students' homework and put forward targeted opinions. If students do not clearly understand the teacher's feedback and modification suggestions, they can also have one-on-one exchanges with the teacher through the network platform. The peer evaluation criteria are detailed, including aspects such as "accuracy of cultural information", "richness of expression vocabulary", and "appropriateness of cultural emotion expression", which guide students to conduct objective and comprehensive evaluations.

Through this way, teachers can not only understand students' learning progress and effect but also promote

interaction and learning among students, enhance cultural confidence, and improve English expression ability. The online evaluation process also cultivates students' critical thinking ability. For example, when evaluating a classmate's video about the Dragon Boat Festival, students need to judge whether the introduction of Qu Yuan's story is accurate and whether the explanation of the cultural significance of dragon boat racing is in place, which deepens their understanding of cultural details.

3.4 Combining online and offline activities to promote cultural inheritance

Students should not only establish cultural awareness and improve cultural level but also achieve cultural inheritance in action. The Curriculum Standard points out that information technology plays an important role in English teaching, and we should make full use of information technology means to create an educational information environment. In the context of modern information technology, students can practice cultural confidence by combining online and offline activities.

This unit introduces some Chinese traditional festivals, which are close to students' daily life and conducive to students' cultural inheritance and enhancement of cultural confidence. In the classroom, teachers encourage students to share their unforgettable experiences and feelings in celebrating traditional festivals, talk about what activities they participated in, and discuss the cultural significance of festivals combined with personal experiences. In the interactive communication, students can further deepen their understanding of festival culture. For example, after a student shares the experience of making Zongzi with his grandmother during the Dragon Boat Festival, the teacher guides the class to discuss the cultural meaning of "filial piety" and "family affection" behind this custom.

In addition, teachers can organize students to participate in online activities. Students can more intuitively understand excellent Chinese traditional culture and appreciate the breadth and depth of Chinese culture by watching videos such as Talking about Chinese Festivals and Hello China. After watching the videos, students discuss and share on the network platform and express their own opinions. Students can also shoot short videos of family festival celebrations, introduce rich festival activities in English, and upload the videos to the class network platform for classmates to learn from. The Hello China series of videos uses simple English and vivid pictures to explain Chinese cultural symbols, which is very suitable for junior high school students to learn and can help them master the accurate English expression of cultural terms.

By combining online and offline activities, students can not only better learn and understand Chinese culture but also show and inherit culture through practical actions. Offline activities focus on sensory experience, such as organizing students to make traditional festival food in the school labor classroom, while online activities expand the scope of cultural dissemination, such as letting students share festival videos on social media to show Chinese culture to a wider audience, which enhances students' sense of responsibility as cultural inheritors.

3.5 Establishing teachers' cultural awareness and improving cultural education ability

Teachers' cultural awareness and cultural education ability are important guarantees for students' cultural confidence improvement. Therefore, teachers should actively improve their own cultural literacy and cultural education ability from multiple aspects, so as to guide students to establish correct cultural awareness and improve cultural level imperceptibly.

First of all, teachers should establish correct cultural awareness, carefully study the Curriculum Standard, understand the nature and curriculum concept of the English course, and realize the transformation from "transmitter of language knowledge" to "communicator of Chinese stories". Teachers should not only teach language knowledge but also spread Chinese culture through language teaching. By deeply understanding and researching the differences and commonalities between Chinese and Western cultures, teachers can better carry out cultural education in teaching, enhance students' cultural understanding, and build cultural confidence. For instance, when explaining the cultural connotations of "family reunion" in Chinese festivals versus the

individualism emphasized in some Western festivals, teachers can use comparative case studies from online cultural databases to help students develop a balanced cross-cultural perspective.

Secondly, teachers should make full use of network resources to learn cultural knowledge, improve cultural literacy, and enhance cultural education capabilities. They can continuously enrich their cultural reserves by watching online courses and documentaries, and participating in virtual cultural exchange activities. For example, platforms like “China University MOOC” offer courses on traditional Chinese culture, while websites such as the “National Center for Cultural Heritage” provide digital archives of historical relics. These resources enable teachers to incorporate authentic cultural elements into their teaching, such as using 3D models of the Forbidden City to illustrate architectural culture in class.

Finally, teachers should stimulate students’ enthusiasm and initiative in learning cultural knowledge in teaching, and improve students’ cultural literacy to lay a foundation for them to tell Chinese stories well. Specific strategies include:

(1) Pre-class preparation: Teachers assign tasks to collect materials, activating students’ existing cultural knowledge. Before learning about festival culture, students are required to search for relevant information about Chinese and Western festivals through search engines or educational websites, such as the historical background of the Mid-Autumn Festival or the customs of Thanksgiving in the United States.

(2) In-class teaching: Teachers integrate network resources, broaden learning and application channels, and use multimodal means for heuristic teaching. For example, they use animated videos to retell the legend of the Dragon Boat Festival, display traditional festival food through 360° panoramic images, and use background music of traditional Chinese instruments to create an immersive cultural atmosphere.

(3) After-class homework: Teachers design hierarchical and targeted assignments based on students’ age characteristics and knowledge base, and implement the integration of “teaching-learning-evaluation” by leveraging the positive role of evaluation. Students may be asked to create a digital storybook about a traditional festival using multimedia software, or conduct a comparative analysis of festival celebrations in different regions through online surveys.

Through the above methods, teachers can not only enhance their own cultural education capabilities but also guide students to establish correct cultural awareness and improve their cultural literacy, laying a solid foundation for students’ all-round development. Regular participation in professional training on cultural education, such as workshops on “Integrating Chinese Culture into English Teaching”, can further help teachers update their cultural knowledge systems and master innovative teaching methods.

3.6 Taking evaluation as the guide to enhance cultural confidence

The *Curriculum Standards* emphasizes that teachers should establish the overall education concept of “teaching-learning-evaluation integration”. To enhance students’ cultural confidence in English teaching, it is recommended to incorporate the evaluation of students’ cultural literacy throughout the teaching process, adopting various evaluation methods such as self-evaluation and peer evaluation. Including the assessment of Chinese traditional culture and cross-cultural communication skills in teaching evaluation helps stimulate students’ interest in learning Chinese culture and enhance their cultural confidence.

In practical teaching, teachers can integrate evaluation into the teaching process through the following methods:

(1) Diversified evaluation methods: In addition to traditional teacher evaluation, teachers can design student self-evaluation and peer evaluation sessions. Self-evaluation forms, such as reflection journals, allow students to record their understanding of cultural knowledge and emotional changes, while peer evaluation through group projects encourages students to provide constructive feedback to their classmates. For example, after completing a

group presentation on Chinese New Year, each group member fills out a peer evaluation form focusing on cultural expression accuracy and teamwork.

(2) Cultural literacy evaluation content: Teachers should focus on students’ understanding of Chinese and Western cultures and their ability to conduct cross-cultural communication in specific contexts. They can design evaluation tasks involving Chinese and Western festival cultures, such as requiring students to write an English article comparing the Spring Festival and Christmas, or role-play a cross-cultural dialogue about festival traditions.

(3) Design of online evaluation forms: After completing the learning of this unit, teachers can design an online evaluation form (as shown in Table 1) for students’ self-evaluation and peer evaluation to comprehensively assess students’ understanding of Chinese and Western festival cultures and their cultural communication abilities. The evaluation form uses a rubric with specific descriptors for each level (e. g. , “Excellent” indicates the ability to vividly describe festival cultural connotations with rich vocabulary, while “Not bad” refers to basic descriptive skills).

Table 1. Self-evaluation form

I can ...	Not bad	Good	Excellent
Get important information about traditional festivals.			
Describe some traditional Chinese festivals correctly and properly.			
Understand the cultural connotations of traditional festivals.			
Enrich cultural knowledge through online and offline resources.			

4 Conclusion

The integration of information technology and English language education is not only a reflection of educational modernization but also a strategic response to the growing need for culturally confident, globally competent students. In the context of junior high school English teaching in China, fostering cultural confidence is both a pedagogical responsibility and a national imperative. As this paper has argued, cultural education should not be treated as an ancillary component of language learning but rather as its core—an enriching, identity-affirming dimension that provides students with purpose and perspective in their English studies.

The six strategies presented—grounded in actual classroom practices and supported by technological tools—demonstrate the feasibility and effectiveness of enhancing students’ cultural confidence through a comprehensive, multimodal approach. From the use of online surveys to diagnose background knowledge, to the integration of rich multimedia resources that deepen cultural understanding, to the redesign of assignments for collaborative evaluation and self-reflection, each strategy empowers students to engage more meaningfully with their own cultural heritage.

Moreover, by combining online and offline activities, teachers can offer students experiential learning opportunities that translate abstract cultural concepts into lived practice. These experiences allow students to become not only learners of culture but active participants and communicators of cultural identity. Whether through recording a family’s festival traditions, participating in bilingual storytelling, or engaging in cross-cultural exchanges with peers abroad, students internalize cultural values while simultaneously improving their language skills and digital literacy.

Teachers, as key agents of change, must continually refine their cultural awareness and pedagogical methods. Through professional development, peer collaboration, and a shift in mindset from language instructor to cultural facilitator, they can more effectively guide students on their journey of self-discovery and cultural affirmation. Equipping teachers with both the technological proficiency and the cultural insight necessary for such tasks should

be a top priority for schools and educational authorities.

Equally important is the role of assessment in sustaining these efforts. By incorporating formative and summative evaluation tools that measure cultural understanding, expression, and growth, educators can reinforce the message that cultural learning is as essential as grammar or vocabulary. Transparent rubrics, student self-assessments, and peer feedback loops help cultivate a classroom culture where diversity, reflection, and creativity are valued and rewarded.

In conclusion, the information technology-supported model proposed in this paper serves not only to enhance students' engagement with English but also to strengthen their connection to Chinese culture. It aligns with national curriculum goals, supports educational equity, and prepares students for intercultural communication in a globalized world. By instilling in students a sense of pride, belonging, and curiosity about their own culture, we empower them to participate in global discourse not as passive recipients but as confident cultural ambassadors.

The path ahead calls for continued experimentation, reflection, and innovation. As digital tools continue to evolve and cultural dynamics shift, educators must remain adaptive and committed to holistic, student-centered approaches. Ultimately, the fusion of information technology and cultural education in junior high school English classrooms presents a powerful opportunity to nurture the next generation of culturally grounded and globally minded citizens.

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